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**COLLEGIAL CZAR OR COMBATANT COMMANDER -
WHO SHOULD LEAD AMERICA'S WAR ON DRUGS?**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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Vietnam has long been considered America's longest war. Yet, today America has been involved in a 30-year war against illicit drugs. Starting as a campaign issue for Presidential candidate Richard Nixon, it has become a sexy political issue for several generations of politicians. Unfortunately, the failure to solve the problem has transformed drugs into a national security threat. The politics of the past 30 years, coupled with a massive increase in federal dollars to finance the war, has proven unsuccessful. The creation of a Drug Czar to bring about unity of effort has failed as a management tool. Given the situation, it is now time to appoint a "combatant commander," in this case the U.S. Attorney General, to fight the war against drugs.

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COLLEGIAL CZAR OR COMBATANT COMMANDER - WHO SHOULD LEAD AMERICA'S COUNTERDRUG WAR?

Americans have an affinity for violence but a hatred of long wars. The summer of 1968 provided both. Around the nightly dinner table, joined by their window to the world, the Silent Majority watched the death and carnage called Vietnam followed by raging protests of longhaired hippies high on marijuana.

Middle America wondered and worried. Had its children forsaken the national values that defeated fascism and economic depression? Did its children lack the moral and physical courage to stand up to the communist predator?

At summer's end, within the shadows of Disneyland's Matterhorn Mountain, Presidential candidate Richard Nixon made sense of their misgivings. One problem stood out among all the others. Illicit drugs "are among the modern curse of the youth, just like plagues and epidemics of former years. And they are decimating a generation of Americans."¹ The first salvo of the War on Drugs had been fired.

Thirty years later, the new Middle Americans, having proved their fortitude to tame the predator while securing the blessings of liberty our forefathers dreamed, still fight their nation's longest war.² Yet there are no demonstrations in the streets.

The questions must be raised. Does the United States really have a drug problem? Is it really a "war" or merely political hype to secure votes at election time? Has the nation wasted

billions of tax dollars in an improperly organized effort to curtail the use of illicit drugs?

In the pages that follow, this paper will show that the current mushrooming drug problem is a result of a flawed organizational structure and interagency process. This structure and process are the results of political rather than practical decisions. Beyond identifying these obvious flaws, the paper will propose an organizational change that would reduce the level of politics and put the proper agencies in charge of counterdrug effort.

POLITICAL MANNA OR "CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER?"

The estimated population of the United States is 270 million people.³ Of this population, 74 million have tried illicit drugs during their lifetime, 23 million used it once during 1996, but only 13 million, or 4.8 percent, are considered addicted. In an economy with a Gross National Product (GNP) of over 8 trillion dollars⁴, America's drug users spend approximately \$57 billion, .007 percent of the GNP, on their habits. More significantly, when considering the top ten causes for deaths in the United States, drugs are not even in the running.⁵

What President Nixon started as a campaign issue has remained one ever since. In 1968, the local police made drug busts in their community. By 1972, nearly 300 federal agents were on the streets kicking in doors and making arrests. Fighting drugs had become a sexy political issue.

Testifying before a Senate Committee, President Nixon's Domestic Policy Advisor, John Ehrlichman, reiterated the appeal of federal drug busts. Voters tune in politicians when the drug issue is discussed, but switch channels when other important issues, such as energy, are debated. This isn't lost on the politician. Ehrlichman continued:

Therefore, the White House often wants to be involved in narcotics problems even when it doesn't need to be. . . . For example, the Feds went into street enforcement partly in response to the obvious political mileage to be gained.⁶

This political manna has continued for 20 years. Every President and every Congress has won votes based on their dedication to fighting the evils of drugs. The war rages on despite budget increases and the proliferation of federal agencies drafted into the struggle.

In an attempt to grasp victory, Congress took two major steps in 1988. First, they created the Office of the National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) through the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988. Second, despite protests from the nation's warrior class, they legislated the active participation of the Department of Defense (DoD) in the counterdrug effort.

The ONDCP's Director was to be the nation's Drug Czar. He would harness the energies of the federal departments and agencies by publishing direction through an annual drug control strategy. While not empowered to direct operations, the Czar would ensure compliance by certifying the drug budgets of the operational agencies. Congress felt that certification and the collegiality of the interagency process were all that was necessary to supervise the counterdrug war. Coupled with the additional resources that DoD brought to the fight, how could the nation fail?

In the ten years since the appointment of the first Drug Czar, the nation's battle record is dismal. America's demands for illicit drugs has not been quenched, nor has the flow of available drugs been stanchered.

This failure spurs a \$57 billion industry within our borders and costs American taxpayers nearly \$67 billion annually. On the personal level, this means each American man, woman and child is taxed an additional \$1000 to cover unnecessary drug-related health care, extra law enforcement, prison construction, auto accidents, crime, and the loss of productivity.⁷

This failure fosters violent crime, clogs the legal system, and creates overcrowded prisons. In his March 1, 1997, radio address to the nation, President Clinton made it clear that:

Illegal drugs are involved with the vast majority of violent crimes in America - drug dealers carrying guns, violent criminals on drugs and out of control, gang wars over drug trafficking turf. One million Americans are arrested every year for breaking the drug laws. Two-thirds of all the men in State prisons have abused drugs regularly.

... When criminals on parole or ex-convicts out of jail go back on drugs, the chances are enormously high they will commit new crimes. According to some experts, 60 percent of all the heroin and cocaine sold in America is sold to people on bail, parole, or probation. Two-thirds of prisoners with a history of heroin or cocaine use who are released without treatment are back on drugs within just 3 months.⁸

The future doesn't look much better. Since 1992, drug use among America's youth has doubled⁹, causing in a rise of teenage violent crime. If this trend is not broken, violent crime on America's streets will double by the year 2010.¹⁰

This failure has created a narcodemocracy in Colombia in which no level of government is untouched by drug money. How long South America's oldest democracy will survive is in question. "About 50 percent of the territory is not under government control, and there is a growing nexus between the narcos and many fronts of the guerrillas. The government is in trouble," according to a senior administration official.¹¹ This nexus funds the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL), each of which provides protection for the cartels and growers. For their services, these groups earned over \$700 million for their coffers between 1990 and 1994. Given that Colombia per capita income is \$1800 compared to the guerrilla's \$65,000¹², it is easy to understand why "market insurgency" has tripled these guerrilla memberships since 1985.

Mexico's democratic institutions and U.S. border security are threatened as well. John Milton, the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Deputy Administrator, identified the Arellano Felix organization as "one of the most powerful, violent and aggressive trafficking organization in the world." Based in Tijuana, the organization

maintains well-armed and well-trained security forces . . . which include international mercenaries as advisers, trainers and members. DEA considers the traffickers from Mexico, because of their involvement in poly-drug smuggling, their proclivity for extreme violence and their geographic proximity to the United States, to be a more distinct and imminent danger to the United States than Colombian organizations.¹³

The United States has a history of intervening in Latin American and Caribbean Island states when its interests are considered threatened. In December 1989, U.S. military forces restored democracy to Panama. In October 1994, U.S. military forces assisted with the restoration of Haiti's democratically elected President. Will the nation's military be required in the future to restore Colombia's democratic institutions? Will this nation's military be required to launch raids into Mexico reminiscent of General "Black Jack" Pershing's pursuit of a modern day Pancho Villa?

U.S. failure in this war has promoted a worldwide criminal confederation that is now identified a transnational threat in the nation's two premier national security documents: A National Security Strategy for a New Century, May 1997, and The National Military Strategy, 1997. In The New War, Senator John Kerry believes these groups are more effective than the Axis alliance of World War II. Virtually no part of the world is untouched by this quasi-alliance of the Italian Mafia, the Russian mobs, the Japanese yakuza, the Chinese triads, the Colombian cartels, the Mexican drug traffickers, the American Mafia¹⁴, and the lesser organizations found in Nigeria, Poland, Jamaica, and Panama. This global reach threatens the stability of their own countries as well as international security.

For example, the Russian mobs have access to sophisticated military equipment that they are willing to sell. In 1997, the

Cali cartel purchased two Soviet military helicopters and numerous crates of AK-47s. Russian efforts to sell them a Tango-class diesel-powered submarine with crew of 20 for \$5 million was dropped after the cartel considered the venture as too ambitious.¹⁵

What politicians have considered political manna for the past 30 years has now become a "Clear and Present Danger" to national and international stability. This asymmetric threat, be it in the pocketbook, violence in the streets, or potential military action to either defend our borders or restore a failed democracy, blatantly challenges our expectations of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Why? Has the Drug Czar failed to produce a workable strategy? Is the Strategy fully resourced to achieve its goals? Or are the involved agencies failing to do their jobs effectively?

FLAWED STRATEGY OR FLAWED EXECUTION?

Annually, the President of the United States is required to publish a counterdrug strategy that outlines the ends, ways, and means to make America drug free. The National Drug Control Strategy, 1997 moved away from the goal that America can be drug free to one that illicit drug use can be reduced to a manageable level within ten years. This end is much more realistic than the previous drug-free America.

The ways are specified in the following five major goals. First, educate America's youth to reject illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. Second, reduce drug-related crime and violence. Third, reduce health and social costs associated with illegal drug use. Fourth, shield America's borders from the drug threat. Fifth, break the foreign and domestic sources of supply.¹⁶

The strategy clearly attacks the problem across the entire front of the drug issue. It recognizes and advocates the need for demand-reduction programs through education and treatment. Supply-reduction operations, the politically preferred effort, focuses on eliminating drugs by destroying the product, breaking up producing cartels, and interdicting traffickers in the source and transit countries. There is no doubt that the strategy offers a clear plan of action. Either insufficient resources (means) or poor execution must be the cause of failure.

Budget constraints are normally offered up when strategies fail. Yet while most federal departments are either level-funded or facing cuts, the federal drug budget appears to be a growth industry. Since 1985, it has grown from \$2.5 billion to \$16 billion. President Clinton has requested \$17.1 billion for fiscal year 1999¹⁷, which the historical record indicates Congress is likely to approve.¹⁸

These increasing funds support an army of federal departments and agencies (see Figure One). Sixteen major departments and a minimum of 44 subordinate agencies have become involved.¹⁹ Given a clear national strategy, abundant financial resources and the legion of counterdrug forces, U.S. failure must be traced to flawed execution. If this is true, why hasn't the Drug Czar taken steps to correct the situation?

One problem is control of resources. The Czar's legal authority is limited to strategy development and certifying counterdrug budgets. Once the funds are dispensed, his ability to influence intradepartmental decisions is negligible. The following examples demonstrate why we fail to make progress in achieving the goals of the National Drug Control Strategy.

Presidential Decision Directive 14 (PDD 14) directed a shift in the counter-supply strategy while creating yet another office, U.S. Interdiction Coordinator. Prior to its publication, interdiction operations were the primary means used to reduce the

flow of illicit drugs into the country. The directive refocused the efforts toward eliminating drugs in the source countries.

Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service U.S. Forest Service Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund U.S. Attorneys Bureau of Prisons Community Policing Criminal Division Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Federal Prisoner Detention Immigration and Naturalization Service Interagency Crime and Drug Enforcement INTERPOL U.S. Marshals Service Office of the Justice Programs Tax Division
Corporation for National and Community Service	
Department of Defense	
Department of Education	
Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Food and Drug Administration Health Care Financing Administration Health Resources and Services Administration Indian Health Service National Institute of Health Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	
Department of Housing and Urban Development	Department of Transportation U.S. Coast Guard Federal Aviation Administration National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Bureau of Land Management U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Park Service	Department of Treasury Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms U.S. Customs Service Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Financial Crimes Enforcement Network Internal Revenue Service U.S. Secret Service Treasury Forfeiture Fund
The Federal Judiciary	U.S. Information Agency
Office of National Drug Control Policy Operations High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Special Forfeiture Fund	Department of Veteran Affairs

Figure One: Federal Departments and Agencies Involved with America's Drug War²⁰

Congress, not sharing President Clinton's enthusiasm for the change, summoned Admiral Robert E. Kramek to testify in his dual roles as Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, and as the first U.S. Interdiction Coordinator. As Commandant, he stated that he was in the process of cutting 4000 people to meet a \$400 million reduction in his operating budget. As a result, his budget for drug interdiction operations decreased from 23 percent in 1990 to 9 percent in 1995.²¹

As U.S. Interdiction Coordinator, he pointed out that when AWACs and radar funding is reduced and Coast Guard vessels are diverted to interdict the Haitian and Cuban boat migrations, drug traffickers are quick to take advantage of the situation. The forces that once provided defense-in-depth had been chipped away into a fragile, single, thin line.²²

The State Department's budget cutting resulted in the closing of the U.S. Consulate in Barranquilla, Colombia, despite DEA protests. According to the DEA, this consulate was critical to their "source country" counterdrug operations.²³ At a time when the supply reduction strategy is being shifted from interdiction operations to source country operations, one must question the wisdom of closing a consulate in the nation that produces 80 percent of the world's cocaine and a substantial amount of heroin.

Domestically, the situation is similar. One-third of the world's marijuana is grown in the United States.²⁴ Each year,

the Army National Guard flies in excess of 36,000 hours supporting domestic law enforcement agencies. The bulk of this support is dedicated to marijuana eradication efforts with 15,000 hours flown in OH-58s. But, under the Army's Aviation Restructuring Initiative, the OH-58 is being phased out and the UH-60 "Blackhawk" is replacing the UH-1 "Huey." The result is that 43 states will lose all or most of its aviation support. Additionally, there are not enough UH-60s being placed in the National Guard inventory to fly the number of hours flown previously.²⁵ Can the nation afford such a decrement at a time when its youth see marijuana as their drug of choice?

Continuing cuts in force structure and resources that do more than support counterdrug operations hampers the implementation of the strategy, thereby, negating annual increases in federal dollars. The Drug Czar has virtually no influence in these decisions.

A second problem lies with Congressional support for the demand reduction portion of the national strategy. According to a 1994 RAND Corporation study, the most cost-effective way to counter the drug problem is treatment. Citing that the nation's two million heavy cocaine users account for over two-thirds of the demand, the researchers pointed out that for a mere additional \$34 million dollars per year in the cocaine treatment budget, they could reduce consumption by 15 percent over the next 15 years.²⁶

Of the estimated \$13 billion spent within the United States to counter cocaine availability, less than one percent (\$1 billion) is spent on treatment.²⁷ Why? Treatment programs are not popular with the American taxpayer. Naturally, Congress is sensitive to this feeling.

President Clinton learned this lesson early. Arguing that since 1.1 million of the estimated 2.5 million hard core users (all drugs) were not receiving treatment because a lack of funding, he proposed to increase the FY 1995 drug treatment programs by 14.3 percent (\$360 million). In two major initiatives, the President sought to increase the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block grant, a program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to a new level of \$335 million. His second initiative was to provide \$200 million to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for the drug court system in order to provide treatment services vice the traditional punitive response. When the proposals reached Capitol Hill, the Congress felt they had a better perception of the problem and only provided \$57 million for the HHS program and \$29 million for drug courts.²⁸

Despite its unpopularity, treatment is key. Jonathan Caulkins, co-director of RAND's drug policy research center made the best argument when he said

There is an understandable skepticism about spending taxpayer dollars on these programs when only a small fraction of drug users who get treatment manage to quit for good. But that is looking at the problem from the

wrong end of the telescope. The programs work and should be funded—not because they are the cure for drug addition, but because they effectively cut consumption and consumption is what drives the drug trade.²⁹

Due to limited legal authority, the Drug Czar is unable to influence other department and agency budget cuts that affect the strategy implementation. He is not consulted when others decide to eliminate, nor can he prioritize within those departments the operational forces to be retained to support the counterdrug effort. Due to current political feelings concerning treatment, he is unable to significantly change congressional funding to target the major abusers of illicit drugs. Is it any wonder the strategy's execution is flawed?

The nation's leadership is committed to a balanced budget while reducing illicit drug use and availability on our streets. There will never be sufficient money to satisfy every bureaucracy's needs, demands, or wants. Therefore, in this period of constrained resources, effective leadership and management of the resources must become the enabling factor that fosters ultimate success in the counterdrug effort. Is the U.S. counterdrug effort properly organized to achieve success in the interagency environment? Is there duplication of efforts? It is a key issue that warrants examination.

UNITY OF EFFORT OR UNITY OF COMMAND?

In 1968, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs was the major federal agency involved in the counter-supply effort. Today, as Figure Two depicts, there are plenty of combatants

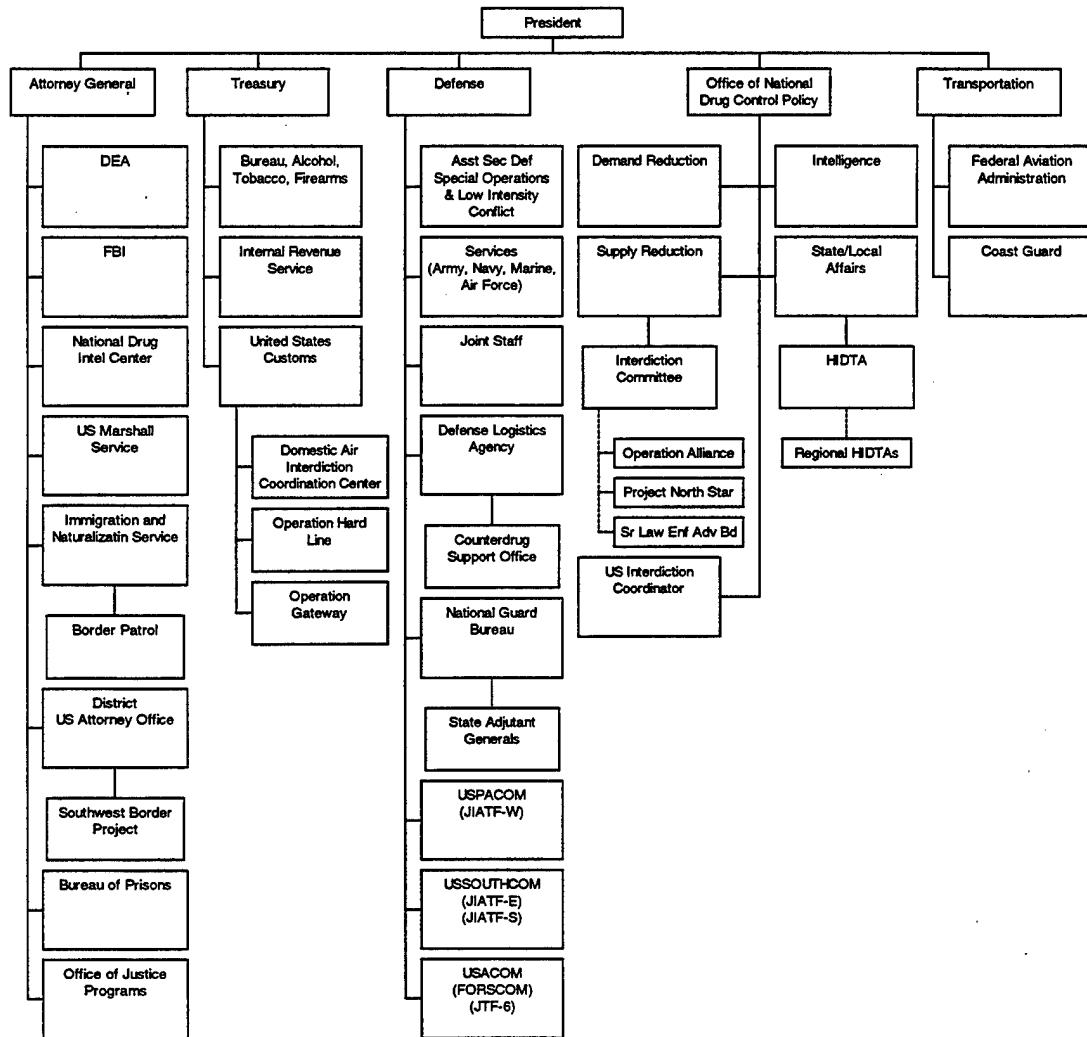


Figure Two: Federal Departments and Agencies Involved in the Domestic Counter Supply Drug Operations³⁰

involved. This has lead to an interagency process that appears confusing, conflicting, and duplicative.

In a Congressional visit to Joint Interagency Task Force East (JITAF), Rear Admiral Andrew A. Granuzo bluntly told the delegation that the primary obstacle in waging an effective counterdrug war was that no one was in charge. Follow on testimony by former Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Paul Yost, former Drug Czar William Bennett, and former DEA Administrator Robert C. Bonner concurred with the assessment.³¹

An examination of efforts along the Southwest Border region reflects a similar situation. Five departments (Treasury, Justice, Transportation, State, and Defense) have initiatives or support multiagency operations in the region. ONDCP has it's own operation through the High Intensity Drug Traffic Area Program (HIDTA) for the Southwest Border. Coordination for the various counterdrug operations is handled by "nine principal Federal coordinating mechanisms."³²

With so many departments and coordinating groups involved, success must be guaranteed. The converse is true. Approximately 75 percent of the illegal drugs entering the nation are transiting through the Southwest border. Cocaine is being shipped in quantities of 8 and 15 tons at a time into Mexico and then broken down into 50-100 kilos for shipment across the U.S. Mexican border.³³

The demand reduction strategy is impacted as well by a lack of communications between departments. Within days after the current Drug Czar's, General (Retired) Barry McCaffrey, visit and

praise for a model Los Angles program, HHS notified the center that their \$700,000 federal grant had been terminated.³⁴ Unfortunately, this is not an isolated instance in the recent history of the counterdrug effort.

Joint Publication 3-08, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vol. I, 9 October 1996, succinctly discusses the interagency problem. Different agencies have different, and sometimes conflicting, goals, policies, procedures, and decision-making and management techniques. Coupled with the lack of an "overarching interagency doctrine that delineates or dictates the relationships and procedures governing" one wonders if interagency unity of effort operations can be successful. The Joint Publication argues it can but it requires "close, continuous interagency and interdepartmental coordination and cooperation, which are necessary to overcome confusion over objectives, inadequate structure or procedures, and bureaucratic and personal limitations."³⁵

The interagency process has worked in the counterdrug war. What was required was a willingness to bust the "rice bowls" to achieve campaign results. Consider the following.

Manchester, New Hampshire, besieged by drug related violent crime, had enough. The community vowed to take back their streets from the Jamaican and other drug dealers. Named Operation Streetsweeper, the effort was led by the Manchester Police Chief and involved the Sheriff's Department, the State

Attorney General's Drug Task Force, the State Police Special Investigations Unit, DEA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Agencies discarded turf issues and focused on one objective: Rid Manchester's streets of drugs and drug dealers. Their success was phenomenal in that they reduced the city's crime rate by 12 percent while establishing effective treatment and prevention programs.³⁶

Peru provides a similar example. The American Ambassador and his country team have worked diligently with President Alberto Fujimori's government in eliminating coca fields. In 1996, coca cultivation dropped by 18 percent and was expected to decrease by another 15 to 18 percent in 1997. Not relying on eradication efforts alone, President Fujimori has authorized the shooting down suspected drug planes. Provided radar data from the U.S., Peruvian pilots have downed 23 planes. Today, drug traffickers now pay pilots \$180,000 per flight versus the standard \$30,000 three years ago. This successful effort is forcing the Colombian cartels to use more expensive ways to get the coca product to their factories.³⁷

Consider ONDCP's own High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program. It is a funded interagency process that includes the primary law enforcement, and sometimes, health officials at the federal, state, and local level in a region. These officials comprise an Executive Committee that develop a

regional plan focusing on overall results, not the Vietnam "body count" syndrome of drug busts by a particular agency. This jointly developed operational plan supports the national drug control strategy and the participating agencies maximize their resources by synchronizing drug control efforts and sharing intelligence. The daily administration of the plan is left to the Director of the Regional HIDTA who is hired and responsible to the Executive Committee. The plan's funding is provided by the ONDCP.³⁸

Has the effort been successful? If the dismantling of 19 drug distribution organizations, 58 money laundering operations, the seizing of \$106 million (this does not include assets seized), and the arrests of seven major Cali Cartel figures operating in the Miami HIDTA area are indicators, then the answer must be an unqualified yes.³⁹

What makes unity of effort work in the interagency process is the legal authority and command position of the lead agency. In Manchester, it's the Chief of Police. In Peru, it's the Ambassador. In the HIDTAs, it's the Director with a budget.

Collegiality is required. Collegiality implies that all the players have relatively equal power and authority. Clearly, Congress failed in the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 to fully empower the Drug Czar to fight his national drug control strategy. Preparing policy direction and certifying budgets lacks the same clout as a department with operational forces.

Considering today's situation, is it wise to continue with a "policy-maker" in charge or appoint a "combatant commander" to fight the war?

COLLEGIAL CZAR OR COMBATANT COMMANDER?

Since it's inception, there have been four Directors, ONDCP. Two have been forgotten. Two are household names. These two were successful because of their ability to use the three C's - "charisma, connections, and cajoling."⁴⁰

The history of the office has shown that a strong personality is required to make progress. The first Czar, William Bennett, had the dynamic personality to blast through bureaucratic walls to achieve results. His office established the focal direction for the various agencies to follow and he had the political clout with the President to ensure their compliance. When he left office, illicit drug abuse was showing a declining trend across the board.

Until the appointment of General McCaffrey, the other strong personality, the Czars were virtually unknown by the American public. Who recalls President Bush's Czar, Bob Martinez, or President Clinton's first Director, Lee Brown? It didn't help the office any when Bush moved Martinez and his staff out of offices next to the White House to make room for a Presidential Counselor. And, President Clinton clearly indicated his preferences by reducing the ONDCP staff from 146 to 25 upon his taking office.⁴¹ It was not until the 1996 Presidential Campaign was nearly upon the administration and the Republicans dusted off

the drug issue, that President Clinton reinvigorated ONDCP by appointing McCaffrey.⁴²

Congressional respect for the office is no different. In 1995, the House eliminated the office. The Senate restored it.⁴³

Among its peer agencies, ONDCP's credibility rests with who is in the Director's seat. One senior Justice Department official called the office "irrelevant."⁴⁴ In 1995, FBI Director Louis Freeh and DEA Administrator Tom Constantine approached the President and argued that the drug war was "lacking . . . leadership."⁴⁵

The time has come to accept the fact that the Drug Czar is really a Gladiator with a rubber sword. As has been stated, and restated, this is not due to any fault of the people who held the office nor their staffs, but rather the shortsightedness of Congress when they passed the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988. Given this failure and the nature of the ever-looming transnational threat funded by America's demand for illicit drugs, we must make a decision. Shall we wave the white flag of surrender or shall we appoint a combatant commander with the authority to wage an effective campaign?

The first choice offers up future generations to the ravages of a dependency that will increase problems rather than reduce them. The second option is our only hope of gaining control on a problem that will never be totally eliminated, but can be manageable.

The Department of Defense is charged with defending the nation from overseas threats. The Department of Justice is responsible for protecting the nation from criminal activity. Until the law changes, illicit drug use, production, selling, and trafficking are criminal offenses. The nation's Chief Law Enforcement Officer is not the Director, ONDCP, but the Attorney General. This office is the combatant commander that can effectively lead the counterdrug effort.

The Attorney General owns the primary law enforcement bureaus responsible for combating illicit drugs and crime on the national and international level. Through its agencies, DEA, the FBI, U.S. Attorney Offices, INS, and the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) it has access to virtually every state and local law enforcement agency. Backed by the federal grants it dispenses, when Justice speaks, the law enforcement community listens. The Director, ONDCP, can not make this claim. Justice operates the two major intelligence centers supporting counterdrug efforts - the National Drug Intelligence Center and the DEA's El Paso Intelligence Center. And, as virtually all involved in the counterdrug war say, intelligence is the silver bullet that ensures campaign success.

Justice is involved in virtually every goal of the national counterdrug strategy. Demand reduction coordinators have offices in both the FBI and DEA national headquarters. DEA, recognizing the importance of education and prevention, has placed demand

reduction coordinators in some field offices and use agents in others to perform these duties. Reduction of drug-related crime and violence are constants through Justice multi-agency cooperation against organized crime, drug dealers, and gangs on the street. FBI-DEA cooperation and coordination, once a barrier, has become the operative method. Through the Bureau of Prisons it conducts treatment programs. Border Patrol agents, deputized annually to make arrests, focus their efforts on interdicting illegal immigrants crossing the nation's borders. Often these people are carriers for drug traffickers. Finally, FBI and DEA agents, working closely as a part of the country teams, assist in source country operations. Domestically, their investigative efforts focus on criminal organizations that produce and distribute narcotic substances. Other than writing the annual National Strategy, the Attorney General is the key operational department in counterdrug efforts.

An articulate, dynamic Drug Czar, such as a Bennett or a McCaffrey, has been required to energize the counterdrug effort under current law. In the future, such individuals may not be available. Conversely, the Attorney General will always be a prestigious and influential Cabinet officer.

This clout allows the Attorney General to take the lead in counterdrug interagency process. Our national tradition precludes the creation of a "superagency" to enforce the laws across the spectrum that illicit drugs involve. Therefore,

interagency cooperation with the Departments of Treasury, State, Transportation and Defense are required. Unity of effort requires the lead agency to have operational authority or budgetary clout to gain the respect of the others involved. On the national and international level, the Attorney General has this authority. Finally, in the realities of the Cabinet hierarchy, the Attorney General has much more political weight than does the Drug Czar.

It is obvious that the Attorney General can not personally manage the counterdrug effort. Therefore, Congress should amend the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 to make the Director, ONDCP, the Deputy Attorney General for Illicit Narcotics Control. Within the scope of this office's duties would be the development of a National Drug Control Strategy, the development and execution of the federal drug budget based on the strategy and approval of Congress, and the lead for the interagency process as applicable to counterdrug operations.

Using the HIDTA model, the focus of the interagency process would be results oriented versus the typical "body count" statistics that permeate government bureaucracies. Each interagency team would assist in the development of the national counterdrug strategy and its subsequent budget. Prior to their submission to Congress, the President or Vice President would be required to validate the proposals. Once approved and funds are appropriated by Congress, departments could not manipulate the

funds without interagency recommendation and approval by the appropriate Congressional committees.

To ensure the demand reduction portion of the strategy is supported, Congress must bite the bullet and accept the fact that until demand is reduced, counter-supply operations, no matter how popular, are merely plugging fingers in an ever expanding dike. The amended law must be take demand reduction into account.

Can treatment be tied to the law enforcement aspect of the counterdrug war? A resounding yes is in order. In fact, it can be a very effective tool as proven by the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA. They found that the arrest rate of participants entered in HIDTA sanctions-based drug treatment programs was 12 percent compared to the 50 percent arrest rate of those in programs that did not enforce participation.⁴⁶

It has been argued that the center of gravity in the drug trade is money. Take away the money and there will be no drug trade. Annually, millions are confiscated, yet drugs still permeate our society. The center of gravity is the user. Reduce consumption and the drug trade dries up. It is only through prevention and treatment programs that we will get a handle on this problem. Until that can be achieved, counter-supply operations, and thereby the Department of Justice involvement, are critical.

In 1968, America thought it was fighting it's longest, needless war in Vietnam. In reality, America has been fighting a

Thirties Year War against the evils of drugs. A vote generator for politicians who failed to effectively fight the war, it has become a threat to our national security. Congressional efforts to grasp victory in 1988 through the creation of a Drug Czar have lead to the development of a realistic National Drug Control Strategy. These efforts have been offset by a lack of the Czar's legal authority to control budgets or influence intradepartmental decisions impacting the reduction of forces used for a variety of missions, to include the counterdrug war.

While Congress expected the Drug Czar to influence the interagency process, it has been demonstrated in the past 10 years that successful efforts have been led by agencies with operational authority or significant budgetary resources. Unfortunately, the Czar has neither of these.

Lacking authority to achieve the job, the moderately successful Drug Czars have been strong personalities that relied on charisma, connections, and cajoling. How much longer does the nation have to suffer under these conditions? The time is ripe for change - a change to appoint a combatant commander to lead the counterdrug war. A Deputy Attorney General for Illicit Narcotics Control is the ideal candidate.

Unless we want to lose yet another generation of young Americans, something must change in how we fight the war. We've tried the collegial czar approach. It hasn't worked. As in all wars, there must be a combatant commander. In all of our

history, when faced with an external threat to our national survival, we never entrusted a "policy maker" lacking operational forces with our fate. Why should we do the same in the war against drugs?

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ENDNOTES

¹ Dan Baum, Smoke and Mirrors: The War on Drugs and the Politics of Failure (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1996), 11-12.

² Depending on point of view, the war can be considered 84 years in duration with the first salvo fired with the signing into law of the Harrison Act, 1914. David F. Musto, The American Disease: Origins of Narcotics Control (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), and Jill Jonnes, Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance With Illegal Drug (New York: Scribner, Inc., 1996) have pointed out that American's have had a long history of drug abuse that flared in the late 1800s, the 1930s, and present day.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, "POPClock Projection"; available from <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/popclock>; Internet; accessed 2 February 1998.

⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, "National Accounts Data"; available from <http://www.bea.doc.gov//bea/dn/niptbl-d.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 1998.

⁵ Office of National Drug Control Policy (hereafter referred to as ONDCP), "Drug Policy Briefing, February 1998"; available from <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/feb98/toc.html>; Internet; assessed 26 February 1998. This briefing provided the cited drug figures. The number of U.S. illicit drug-related deaths in 1995, the last figures available, was 9,216. According to the Center for Disease Control, in the same year, deaths from automobile accidents were 41,786; other types of accidents, 47,916; pneumonia and influenza, 83,528; and suicide, 30,893.

⁶ Baum, Smoke and Mirrors, pp 67.

⁷ ONDCP, The National Drug Control Strategy 1997 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1997), 15.

⁸ William J. Clinton, "The President's Radio Address" in Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 10 March 1997); available from <http://www.elib.com>; Internet; accessed 10 October 1997.

⁹ ONDCP, The National Drug Control Strategy 1997, 13.

¹⁰ Congress, House, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Activities of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, One Hundred Fourth Congress, First and Second Sessions, 1995-1996 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2 January 1997), 124-125.

¹¹ Douglas Farah, "United States Resumes Aid To Columbia," The Washington Post, 27 December 1997, A01; available from

<http://search.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1997-12/27/0721-122797-idx.html>; Internet; accessed 28 December 1997.

¹² James R. Van de Velde, "The Growth of Criminal Organizations and Insurgent Groups Abroad due to International Drug Trafficking," Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement 5, no. 3 (Winter 1996): 472.

¹³ Douglas Farah, "Mercenaries at Work for Mexico's Drug Families," The Washington Post, 30 October 1997, A25; available from <http://search.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPArch/1997-10/30/168-f-103097-idx.html>; Internet; accessed 5 November 1997.

¹⁴ Institute for National Strategic Studies, Strategic Assessment 1997: Flashpoints and Force Structure (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997); available from <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/sa97/sa97ch16.html>; Internet; accessed 10 November 1997.

¹⁵ Douglas Farah, "Russian Mob, Drug Cartels Joining Forces," The Washington Post, 29 September 1997, A01.

¹⁶ ONDCP, The National Drug Control Strategy 1997, 30-31. The 1998 Strategy was published on 13 February 1998 and retains the same five goals.

¹⁷ ONDCP, "White House Drug Czar McCaffrey: \$17 Billion Anti-Drug Budget is Largest Ever, Strengthens Youth Drug Prevention" (Press Release) 2 February 1998; available from <http://whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/news/press/1998/020298.html>; Internet; accessed 10 February 1998.

¹⁸ Traditionally, supply reduction programs receive the lion's share of this budget. In FY98, 65.8 percent of the funds are devoted to this functional area. The remaining 34.3 percent focus on demand reduction programs to include a highly publicized \$195 million national advertisement campaign focusing on drug abuse prevention.

¹⁹ ONDCP, The National Drug Control Strategy, 1997: FY 1998 Budget Summary, February 1997; available from <http://www.ncjrs.org/htm/toc2.htm>; Internet; accessed 10 November 1997. Not all subordinate agencies of federal departments are identified. For example, the Department of Defense has a wide variety of participants involved in the drug war. They range from the Joint Staff and Commanders in Chiefs of Unified Commands to the National Guard.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Congress, House, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Hearings before Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice, Illicit Drug Availability: Are Interdiction Efforts Hampered by Agency Resources?, 104th Cong., 1st sess., 27-28 June 1995, 149.

²² Ibid., 152 -153.

²³ Ibid., 83.

²⁴ Ibid., 151.

²⁵ Edward E. Stelzer, "Military Support to Domestic Law Enforcement Agencies: A Policy with Unintended Consequences" (USAWC Fellowship Research Project, United States Army War College, 1 June 1996), 32-34.

²⁶ Rand Corporation, "Treatment: Effective (But Unpopular) Weapon Against Drugs," Spring 95; available from <http://www.rand.org/publications/RRR/RRR.spring95.crime/treatment.html>; Internet; accessed 10 November 1997.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Lief Roderick Rosenberger, America's Drug War Debacle (Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1996), 53-54.

²⁹ Rand.

³⁰ William W. Mendel and Murl D. Munger, Strategic Planning and the Drug Threat (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, August 1997), 22, 65.

³¹ Congress, Activities of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, One Hundred Fourth Congress, First and Second Sessions, 1995-1996, 318.

³² ONDCP, An Overview of Federal Drug Control Programs on the Southwest Border, August 1997; available from <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/border>; Internet; accessed 5 December 1997.

³³ Congress, Illicit Drug Availability: Are Interdiction Efforts Hampered by Agency Resources?, 63-64.

³⁴ Bill Boyarsky, "The Spin: Back Room Deals Undercut the Drug War," Los Angeles Times, 16 June 1996, Home Edition, Metro, 1; available from <http://www.elib.com>; Internet; accessed 15 September 1997.

³⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vol I, Joint Publication 3-08 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 9 October 1996), I-4, I-5.

³⁶ Congress, House, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Hearing before Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice, The Drug Problem in New Hampshire: A Microcosm of America, 104th Cong., 1st sess., 25 September 1995, 58.

³⁷ Anthony Faiola, "As Coca Market Goes, So Shall They Reap," The Washington Post, 18 November 1997, A15; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1997-11/18/0661-111897-idx.html>; Internet; accessed 22 November 1997.

³⁸ Edward E. Stelzer, <Edward_Stelzer@ondcp.eop.gov>, "Paper," electronic mail message to Larry Keeton <lkeeton@aol.com>, 11 March 1998.

³⁹ South Florida HIDTA, Annual Report Fiscal Year 1997, 19 September 1997, 1-2.

⁴⁰ Gordon Witkin, "The Bad-News Drug Czar," U.S. News and World Report, 10 February 1992; available from <http://www.elib.com>; Internet; accessed 15 September 1997.

⁴¹ Gordon Witkin, "How Politics Ruined Drug-War Planning," U.S. News and World Report, 22 February 1993; available from <http://www.elib.com>; Internet; accessed 15 September 1997.

⁴² As a condition of acceptance, McCaffrey demands the ONDCP staff be enlarged. President Clinton agreed.

⁴³ Michael Falco, "U.S. Drug Policy: Addicted to Failure," Foreign Policy, 102 (Spring, 1996): 123, UMI ProQuest, General Periodicals Ondisc [CD-ROM], 1996, item 02751119.

⁴⁴ Witkin, "The Bad-News Drug Czar."

⁴⁵ Gordon Witkin, "The Troubled Reign of the Nation's Drug Czar," U.S. News and World Report, 8 September 1997; available from <http://www.elib.com>; Internet; accessed 1 October 1997.

⁴⁶ Steny H. Hoyer, "Hoyer Applauds HIDTA's Efforts to Fight Crime in Washington/Baltimore Area" (Press Release) 2 October 1997; available from <http://www.house.gov/hoyer/pr10297.htm>; Internet; accessed 26 February 1998.

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